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AUTHOR Wallace, Mike
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ABSTRACT

This paper explores how characteristics of complex educational change may virtually dictate the leadership strategies adopted by those charged with bringing about change. The change in question here is the large-scale reorganization of local education authorities (LEAs) across England. The article focuses on how across-the-board initiatives to reorganize schools were managed in LEAs and the effects of this reorganization on the different administrative levels of the education system. The information is based on 325 interviews that were conducted with 188 school staff, LEA staff, and central government civil servants. The essay describes characteristics of reorganization as a complex educational change and examines the implications for change leadership and their relationship to cultural and political factors. Elements of Bass's generic theory of transformation leadership are described as a framework for analyzing LEA officials' change leadership strategies. This framework depiction is followed by a discussion of how characteristics of reorganization increased the complexity resident in managing the schools, prompting LEA officials to adopt a combination of leadership strategies that could be characterized as restricted transformational or transactional. Leaders were led to minimize resistance to change by focusing on a cultural transformation that was designed to win over stakeholders. (Contains 29 references.) (RJM)

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Mission Impossible? Leadership Responsibility without Authority for Initiatives to Reorganise Schools

Mike Wallace

Cardiff University
School of Social Sciences
Glamorgan Building
King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff
CF10 3WT
Wales, UK

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Mission Impossible? Leadership Responsibility without Authority for Initiatives to Reorganise Schools

Leadership Challenge

Leaders, according to popular image, make things happen through their impact on the actions of followers. Yet they do not operate in a vacuum. Salient aspects of leaders' context create imperatives to act and parameters which delimit the range of strategies available to them. In this sense, 'things make leaders happen' (Bolman and Deal 1991). Over recent decades, the complexity of many educational changes has increased with the advent of central government reforms among western nations in response to economic, technological and demographic pressures, affecting the nature of leadership to put such changes into practice. It is my contention that characteristics of increasingly complex change contribute to making certain forms of change leadership happen.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how characteristics of complex educational change may virtually dictate the leadership strategies adopted by those charged with central responsibility for bringing it about. The change in question is large scale reorganisation of schooling across entire English local education authorities (LEAs - equivalent to large districts in the USA), subject of recently completed research. The challenge of leading major LEA reorganisation initiatives falls primarily to LEA chief education officers (CEOs - equivalent to school district superintendents) and their colleague officials, the professional staff who carry out the executive tasks of local government.

The English education system consists of three administrative levels. The pattern of governance for most publicly funded schools determines the involvement of stakeholders at each level in reorganisation of local schooling:

- central government - ministers from the elected majority political party regulate the nature, overall resourcing and governance of the national system of schooling. They can employ legislation and resource incentives or penalties to persuade LEAs to remove surplus student places in their schools;
- local government - elected councillors in the majority political party in each locality are responsible for local taxation which part-funds schooling, and for their LEA. They have a duty to regulate the supply of student places which includes taking reorganisation initiatives if deemed necessary;
- school - elected or co-opted members of the governing body for each school represent parents, the local community, the LEA and school staff. (Governing bodies approximate to school boards in the USA but there is a separate governing body for each school.) Governors' responsibilities include appointing staff within an annual budget covering their salaries, set by the LEA according to central government parameters. Headteachers (principals) attend governors' meetings and may decide whether to accept governor status and so entitlement to vote on governing body decisions. They are responsible for school leadership within the oversight of the governing body.

According to a central government estimate, the number of surplus places across England had reached some 1.5 million by the early 1990s (DES 1992). It was generated by a national decline in the birth rate since the 1970s and by local demographic changes such as population drift away from rural areas. Reorganisation tends to be unpopular with parents and staff in

schools who become aware of what they stand to lose from it long before they experience what they might gain. Many local councillors, mindful of the risk that a disliked policy might cost them precious votes among parents of school age children, were unwilling to tackle the mounting surplus. By this time, ministers in the past Conservative central government, like their counterparts in other countries including the USA (Osborne and Gaebler 1992), had embarked on a raft of policies to reduce burgeoning expenditure in the public sector through attempts to increase efficiency of service provision. Within this policy thrust, ministers eventually gave themselves powers to intervene if LEAs with a substantial proportion of surplus places did not undertake reorganisation initiatives of their own (DFE 1994). Accompanying this threat was a central government incentive for LEAs: a related policy enabled them to borrow capital from the centre at a very advantageous interest rate specifically for school building and refurbishment connected with reorganisation. The more places removed, the more capital borrowing allowed.

The rationale for lowering the proportion of surplus places is, fundamentally, economic: to save taxpayers' money required to maintain them. The running costs of a half empty school (including heating, lighting, building maintenance and cleaning) are little less than those for one that is full to capacity. A reorganisation initiative stands to reap substantial long term savings by reducing the number of under-used schools and redistributes students to fill the smaller number of institutions scheduled to remain. Redundant school sites can be sold off, a lucrative proposition in urban situations where there is pressure on land for development. Reorganisation also presents a rare opportunity to improve the standard of educational provision, whether indirectly through new building and refurbishment of schools that will remain, or more directly through fostering improvement efforts by school staff (faculty) as they come together to make a fresh start in reorganised institutions (Wallace and Pocklington 1998).

Initiatives are designed to downsize provision amongst all the schools under LEA jurisdiction, which may number several hundred, to match supply of school places in the area more closely with the decline in local demand. Their aim is achieved through an LEA wide programme of closures, mergers, contraction through removal of temporary classrooms, expansion, and changes in the student age range for which institutions cater. The pattern of school governance and legislation affecting reorganisation at the time of the research determined that initiatives affecting any school or group of institutions consisted of three consecutive stages. Following Fullan's (1991) classification of generic components of the change process, they may be distinguished as:

- *initiation* - drafting LEA formative proposals for reorganising schools, statutory consultation with interested parties in the locality including parents of schools scheduled for reorganisation, and submission of formal proposals to central government for approval;
- *implementation* - making arrangements for such proposals as are approved by central government to be enacted by the scheduled reorganisation date, normally at the beginning of a school year. A potentially contentious LEA task was to orchestrate the redeployment, premature retirement or compulsory redundancy (termination of employment) of displaced staff from closing or merging schools;
- *institutionalisation* - an indefinite period beyond the reorganisation date lasting several years, during which staff in reorganised schools became familiar with working together in the post-reorganisation regime.

Stages consisted of processes punctuated by key events which imposed a 'critical path' of activity leading up to the deadline they represented (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The critical path followed by stages of reorganisation

initiation stage

- the development of LEA proposals (process);
- local publication of these proposals (event);
- statutory local consultation on proposals (process);
- LEA submission of revised proposals to central government for approval (event);
- central government assessment of LEA proposals (process);
- central government decision and announcement (event);

implementation stage

- implementation of approved proposals prior to the scheduled reorganisation date (process);
- formal completion on this date (event);

institutionalisation stage

- subsequent development in schools emerging from reorganisation (process).

LEA initiatives might consist of several phases, each affecting a different locality at any time, but all phases would follow the same stage sequence. Responsibility for leading initiatives was distributed differently across stages. LEA officials were required to orchestrate the entire initiation stage, while central government ministers set limits to the scope of reorganisation initiatives through their power of decision, at the time of the research, over formal proposals for all schools affected. During the implementation stage, LEA officials held responsibility for preparation to enact all approved proposals which was complemented by the responsibility of governors, headteachers and other senior school staff for making detailed arrangements affecting their own institution. Institutionalisation after the official reorganisation date was primarily a school level responsibility, with LEA officials' involvement reduced to assisting where difficulties arose, and supporting school improvement activity. The focus of this paper is confined to the change leadership offered by LEA officials, since associated leadership at central government and school levels depended on their efforts. If LEA officials did not succeed at the initiation stage, reorganisation would not happen; if they failed to play their part effectively during the implementation stage, reorganisation would be chaotic, impacting negatively on institutionalisation and so on students' education.

Mission Impossible?

The mix of relevant central government policies did not make it easy for LEA officials to achieve leadership success. Central government ministers of the day were not simply pressuring them to reduce the proportion of surplus student places. They were simultaneously stripping LEAs through education reforms of most of their authority in respect of schools so as to enhance their autonomy at LEA expense (Audit Commission 1989). When managing earlier reorganisations, LEA officials had relied on their authority over employment in schools, enabling them to control redeployment of displaced staff. This same central government was making their leadership task even more intractable by pursuing a contradictory policy of

encouraging schools to opt out of LEA control and become 'grant maintained' (approximating to the 'charter schools' movement in the USA), directly funded from the centre (Fitz et al 1993). A prime reason for school governing bodies applying to central government for permission to opt out was to escape threat of closure or merger under LEA reorganisation proposals (Audit Commission 1996) during the initiation stage of reorganisation. So, from the perspective of LEA officials, conditions were ripe for leadership failure: they had responsibility without concomitant authority, and they risked losing LEA schools to the grant maintained sector which would then shore up surplus capacity in the locality.

The mix of central government policies was a key contextual feature of reorganisation. Some policies created, by design, a strong imperative for LEA officials to instigate large scale initiatives. Other policies intended to curb their authority over schools, whose instigators did not allow for the unusual circumstances of reorganisation, set parameters by default which constrained LEA officials' strategies for leadership of the change. These policies contributed to the characteristics of reorganisation as a highly complex change to manage. Reorganisation is therefore one example of complex educational change which, while unique in its detail, arguably exhibits generic characteristics of complexity. It offers provides a starting point for considering how the complexity of educational change affects the form of change leadership.

The remainder of the paper explores how leadership offered by LEA officials to reorganise schooling was affected by the complexity of this change. First, the research design and methods are described. Second, a combined cultural and political perspective is put forward which enables patterns of interaction between leaders and others to be explained by foregrounding the reciprocal relationship between individuals' beliefs and values and their differential use of power to realise their interests, and facilitates investigating the role of power in shaping culture and the impact of cultural factors on use of power. Third, characteristics of reorganisation as a complex educational change are set out and their implications for change leadership discussed with reference to cultural and political factors. Fourth, elements of Bass's (1985) generic theory of transformational leadership are described as a framework for analysing LEA officials' change leadership strategies. Fifth, it is argued that the characteristics of reorganisation making it complex to manage caused LEA officials to adopt a combination of what will be termed 'restricted transformational and transactional leadership' strategies. Sixth, selected research findings are summarised to illustrate how this approach to leadership was expressed by LEA officials during each stage of the reorganisation process. Finally, it is suggested that further research could build on this study to explore further the link between complexity of change and change leadership.

Research Design and Methods

The aim of the investigation was to examine how large scale LEA initiatives to reorganise schools were managed in LEAs and schools within the context of a variety of central, LEA and school policy changes which affected the course of reorganisation. Accordingly, the research concentrated both on what happened across the different administrative levels of the education system and on the short and medium term consequences for school leadership once reorganisation was officially over. The study was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council for two years and nine months from January 1996. Methods of investigation were qualitative, informed by techniques of data analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Access was negotiated to investigate two major reorganisation initiatives which were already under way. Focused, interpretive case studies (Merriam 1988) were carried out during 1996

and 1997 of the two LEA initiatives and eighteen of their schools facing radical changes such as merger, or where an application had been made to become grant maintained so as to avoid LEA proposals for closure. Implementation of the final phase of the initiative in one LEA was completed in September 1996, data being collected in the term before reorganisation and for over a year afterwards. Implementation of the final phase of the initiative in the other LEA was completed in September 1997, data being gathered for over a year before the reorganisation date and in the succeeding term. The number of schools reduced to ten from the date of reorganisation when closures and mergers took place.

Semi-structured interviews and document survey concentrated, contemporaneously, on tasks of managing implementation of approved reorganisation proposals and managing schools surviving reorganisation. There was also a retrospective focus on management tasks of those responsible for developing LEA proposals and interaction between groups with an interest in the content of proposals and outcomes of consultation. Supplementary interviews gathered contextual information from headteachers of expanding first or closing middle schools within the same 'pyramid' as the borough case study schools, and the headteacher and other senior staff in an expanding county secondary school. Interviews with central government civil servants elicited, retrospectively, information on liaising with the LEAs and assessing formal proposals. Altogether, 325 interviews were conducted with 188 respondents: three quarters with school staff and governors; a fifth with LEA staff; and the remainder with central government civil servants. Research questions were derived from a literature review and exploratory study (Wallace 1996a; 1996b). Fieldnotes were taken during interviews which were also tape recorded. Interview summaries fed into site summaries as the basis for cross-site analysis, data being displayed as matrices; the data set was scanned for broad themes and to explore the contextual complexity of particular situations. Impact of the complexity of reorganisation on LEA officials' leadership of the change was a major theme emerging inductively from the data.

A Cultural and Political Perspective on Interaction

The conceptual orientation of the research incorporates a dual cultural and political perspective (Wallace and Hall 1994; Wallace and Huckman 1999) for analysing interaction. This perspective is based on literature about staff professional cultures (Nias et al 1989; Bolman and Deal 1991) and micropolitics (Hoyle 1986; Blase and Anderson 1995). Giddens' (1984) analysis of interaction, entailing a definition of power as either synergistic or conflictual, was used to conceptualise how actors have differential access to resources in endeavouring to realise their interests according to their beliefs and values, which are shared to a varying extent with other parties to interaction.

A simple definition of organisational *culture* is 'the way we do things around here' (Bower 1966). Culture is largely internalised, and the norms or rules of behaviour guiding interaction among those who subscribe to a culture rest on shared symbols, beliefs and values. Norms may be explicit, perhaps enshrined in a formal policy, or implicit, becoming noticeable only when transgressed. Symbolic elements of culture are those where patterns of action represent a shared value (as when staff, parents and students participate in a social event to mark the closing of a school). Administrators' professional culture encompasses beliefs and values spanning leadership, management and relationships. Where groups share distinctive beliefs and values, they may form subcultures. In such 'differentiated cultures' (Meyerson and Martin

1987), meanings are shared within subcultural boundaries, but there is disjunction between beliefs and values of the different groups.

Power is taken to mean 'transformative capacity': the capability to intervene in events so as to alter their course. Expression of power need not necessarily imply conflict; parties to interaction who cooperate synergistically have ability to work towards shared goals. Equally, each protagonist in a conflict situation may employ transformative capacity to achieve opposing goals. Two forms of power may be distinguished (Bacharach and Lawler, 1980): authority means use of resources legitimated by individuals' beliefs and values associated with status including the right to apply sanctions, often backed by law. In contrast, influence refers to informal use of resources where there is no recourse to sanctions linked to authority, though other sanctions (such as withdrawal of support) may be available. While access to resources varies, any individual is likely to have access to some form of influence. Parties to interaction are implicated in a flow of action and response where each party acts to realise her or his interest and responds to others' attempt to achieve theirs, which may or may not coincide. Conversely, in everyday situations no individual has absolute power: it is distributed, however unequally, within and between institutions and system levels. People use such resources as are available to them to realise their perceived interest: some desired state of affairs that will contribute to the fulfilment of their purposes. The challenge for LEA officials of leading the reorganisation initiatives derived largely from their lack of authority over stakeholders from central government and from school communities, coupled with the gap between their LEA wide promotional interest in reorganisation and the sectional interests of groups concerned solely to protect particular schools and their staff.

Leadership Implications of Complex Educational Change

A dictionary definition of the adjective 'complex' is: 'composed of more than one, or of many parts: not simple: intricate: difficult' (Chambers 1983, p257). The overarching feature of complex educational change lies in its duality as a single entity - the change itself (like reorganisation of schooling), and as a set of constituent parts (such as the range of people affected by reorganisation and their differential awareness of each other's activity). There can be no clear distinction between simple and complex educational changes. They may be more usefully conceived as ranging along a continuum from the relatively simple, as in teachers' routine experience of receiving a new class of students, to the highly complex. As the complexity of educational change increases, so does the range of its constituent parts and the amount of interaction between them. Complex educational changes vary. Some parts may be more or less universal, like the significance of forms of interaction other than face-to-face. Others may be particular to the content and context of the change at hand. So although it is impossible precisely to specify the parts whose combined contribution makes up the complexity of all complex educational changes, it is plausible to identify key characteristics, some of which may be generic or at least have applicability beyond the immediate situation.

Understanding large scale reorganisation of schooling as an instance of complex educational change implies consideration of patterns amongst the myriad interactions within and between administrative levels of the education system that this change embodies, together with the contexts in which these interactions were embedded. A hierarchically ordered typology derived from the data is summarised in Table 1. There are five overarching characteristics, subdivided into more detailed constituents. All affect change leadership; an illustrative implication is highlighted for each.

Table 1: Characteristics of complex educational change and implications for change leadership

Complex change characteristics reflected in LEA reorganisation initiatives	*Illustrative implications for leadership of change*
1. Magnitude	
• large number of people involved and affected	• inform all groups and prepare those contributing to implementation
• extensive range of specialist knowledge and priorities	• assess import of diverse knowledge and priorities
• multiplicity of disparate management tasks	• establish roles and procedures, delegate tasks
• plurality of partially incompatible beliefs and values, within limits	• assess importance of engendering culture of acceptance
2. Differential Impact	
• variable extent of change in individuals' practice and new learning required	• create conditions for learning to manage change and solve associated problems
• variable emotive force, which may alter over time	• promote positive vision to pre-empt or minimise potential resistance
• varied congruence with sectional interests, which may alter over time	• seek confluence between leaders' and others' interests through compromise
• varied reciprocal effect on other ongoing activities	• plan allocation of change management tasks taking account of other work
• variable awareness of the totality beyond that part of direct concern	• disseminate information to promote understanding of the change as a whole
3. Interrelated and Differentiated Parts	
• range of sequential and overlapping components	• plan for all components and ensure good communication between all groups affected
• diversity of components affecting different individuals and groups at particular times	• ensure change agents available to work on all components and meet users' changing needs
4. Inside a Multilevel System	
• multidirectional flow of coordinated interaction within and between system levels	• establish strong internal communication and nurture links among groups at other levels
• unequal distribution of power within and between system levels	• use authority and maximise influence through fostering a supportive culture
• interdependence between all individuals and groups affected	• promote shared vision to encourage voluntary collaboration and mutual support
• ambiguity as network of interactions may produce diverse consequences across levels	• plan incrementally and monitor continually across system levels
• mixture of direct encounters and interaction through intermediaries	• distribute leadership, establish extensive indirect communication links
• management tasks across system levels	• encourage change agents to be sensitive to the context of people based at other levels
5. Interaction with a Multidimensional Context	
• impact of evolving profile of other planned and unplanned changes	• plan taking other changes into account, monitor and adapt where others impact
• impact of accretion of past changes	• plan with legacy of past changes as parameter

First, how complex educational change is managed will obviously be affected by the ambition of its scope or *magnitude*:

- a *large number of people are involved or affected*. The LEA reorganisation initiatives necessitated changes in the work and career of over a thousand school staff and in educational provision for many more parents and students. Leaders had to plan for all groups involved or affected to be adequately informed and prepared where necessary so that they could make their contribution;
- so many people were bound to possess an *extensive range of specialist knowledge and priorities* which depended on their work responsibility or community situation, what they wanted out of reorganisation, or what they wanted to protect. LEA officials were concerned to win acceptance for their proposals and avoid losing schools to the GM sector. School staff tended to be most worried about their job prospects, whereas parents wished to ensure that a school would be available nearby. Leaders had to assess the varied specialist knowledge and priorities of different groups and judge how far they must be taken into account and how they might be harnessed;
- the scale of the change dictated a *multiplicity of disparate management tasks*. CEOs and senior colleagues had to orchestrate the whole process. Headteachers might have to manage closure or merger on top of their normal management and teaching activity. Central government civil servants had to manage the scrutiny of formal proposals. Leaders had therefore to identify the range of management tasks and establish roles and procedures for ensuring that they were all carried out, implying extensive delegation;
- these people, in different situations, would inevitably subscribe to a *plurality of partially incompatible beliefs and values, within limits* of certain assumptions about the nature of their entitlement and constraints on alternative courses of action. LEA officials believed in the ability of their proposals to retain adequate provision within a reasonable distance from the home of every school-age child. When their proposals threatened existing arrangements, many parents and other community members who accorded with the principle of reorganisation rallied around their shared 'nimbyist' (not in my back yard) belief in retaining current provision for their children. Yet the legitimacy of LEA officials launching the reorganisation initiative was never questioned. An issue for leaders arose over how far to attempt to shape beliefs and values shared among particular groups which did not accord with the reorganisation proposals, so as to gain their acceptance.

Second, complex educational change has *differential impact* on all these people:

- the *extent of change in individuals' practice and the new learning required* was very varied. The LEA initiatives were a novel project for many LEA officials, and operating without authority over staff appointments was new for them all. Some headteachers and governors were required to manage closure or merger while others merely gained or lost a year group of students. Leadership therefore entailed identifying those faced with managing more radical changes and creating favourable conditions for to learn their new tasks, including preparatory training and support with tackling problems that might emerge;
- the *emotive force* of the change was equally diverse, depending on how individuals' sectional interests were affected. Reorganisation was merely part of LEA officials' job and its emotive potential hit mainly those who found themselves running contentious public meetings or on the receiving end of public protest. Headteachers in schools scheduled to expand were enthusiastic, whereas staff morale in closing schools dipped and many parents

were moved to protest against proposals. Leaders had to consider where conditions for expression of strong negative emotions existed, and what pre-emptive or ameliorative steps were available, such as training officials who were to hold the public consultation meetings;

- the content of proposals could be *congruent with particular sectional interests* or diametrically opposed to them. Where strong resistance was possible, one leadership strategy was to use such authority as LEA officials possesed to seek a confluence between the LEA wide promotional interest in reorganisation and other stakeholders' sectional interest at hand, if necessary through compromise;
- the change had a contrasting *reciprocal effect on other ongoing activities*. For some LEA and school staff, tasks connected with reorganisation were a minor element of their work profile while, for others, managing their part of reorganisation consumed most of their working hours over many months. Leaders had to consider how the additional tasks of managing reorganisation were to be fitted into the totality of all individuals' workload;
- *awareness of the totality of the change beyond that part of direct concern* was hierarchically distributed. Senior LEA officials had an overview of the whole initiative, though they were shorter on appreciation of the impact of their efforts on particular schools and communities than the people based at this level. Central government civil servants had an overview of firm proposals and documented responses from school level, but most had never been inside any of the schools. Staff and parents had only a summary view of the reorganisation initiative, little knowledge of its impact on institutions other than those in the immediate locality, but detailed awareness of what lay within their first hand experience. Leaders had to plan how to disseminate information widely and to cope with variable concern to understand the initiatives as a totality.

Third, complex educational change is an entity made up of an intricate web of *interrelated and differentiated parts*:

- the LEA reorganisation initiatives consisted of a *range of sequential and overlapping components*, consisting of sequential annual phases covering each locality in turn. There was a long period of overlap, LEA officials seeing the implementation stage of an earlier phase through to completion while getting initiation under way for a later phase covering another area. A key leadership task was to plan for all the components and their impact on each other and ensure good communication links across levels, including how to capitalise on early experience to ensure that lessons learned were applied subsequently in other areas;
- a *diversity of components affected different individuals and groups at particular times*. LEA officials' activity was differentiated according to the range of content within proposals for each school and according to progress with each stage. Leaders had to ensure that officials were empowered to carry out their overlapping sequence of tasks relating to the schools for which they had responsibility, taking into consideration the diverse and changing needs of other stakeholders.

Fourth, much complex educational change occurs *inside a multilevel system* which both shapes and constrains the ways in which stakeholders interact:

- reorganisation entailed a *multidirectional flow of coordinated interaction within and between system levels*. Depending on the stage of the initiatives, there was repeated exchange amongst LEA officials and between senior officials and local councillors, between LEA officials and central government civil servants, between LEA officials and members of

school communities, and amongst the latter. Leaders had to foster good communication links internally, and also with the many groups at school level over whom they had little or no authority;

- there was *unequal distribution of power within and between system levels*. LEA officials were authorised by local councillors to proceed with the reorganisation initiatives. National law required members of school communities to be consulted about LEA proposals for their school. Otherwise the latter had no authority to block reorganisation but considerable recourse to influence if they wished to resist proposals. LEAs were subject to central government authority to push them into undertaking reorganisation. Underlying economic conditions exerted pressure on central and local government. Leaders had to cope with responsibility for instigating and managing a change which over-ran the span of their authority in respect of groups at other system levels. They were obliged partly to rely on influence which could be enhanced by fostering support for their efforts from these groups;
- conversely, there was a relationship of *interdependence between all individuals and groups affected* by reorganisation. Central government ministers relied on LEA officials and school staff to bring it about, while the latter relied on central government to support their case and on each other to implement whatever decision was made. The approach to change leadership would have to include a significant emphasis on voluntary collaboration and trust built on a shared vision of what was to be achieved. Interdependence implied that leaders needed the support of other stakeholders who could otherwise use influence to resist any attempt to coerce them into compliance.
- multiple levels led to an enduring element of *ambiguity due to the network of cross-level interactions producing diverse consequences*. The full impact of actions at different levels could be hidden from their perpetrators because they were not party to many interactions which might be stimulated by their endeavours. There was some unpredictability about the future path of reorganisation initiative for much of the time: it was not a foregone conclusion at the initiation stage for each phase of reorganisation either that local councillors would support LEA officials or that central government ministers' support for LEA proposals would outweigh their concern to promote the GM schools sector. Leaders' planning had to include an incremental element and continual monitoring across levels to reduce the possibility of negative unintended consequences jeopardising their efforts;
- the multilevel nature of reorganisation implied that those involved would experience a *mixture of direct encounters and interaction through intermediaries*. All had face-to-face interaction with others based at their system level with whom they were most closely associated. The channels for such communication between levels were fewer, with greater dependence on electronic or documentary means. Participants in many interactions across levels included representatives of absent players on whose behalf they were working. LEA officials who fronted public consultation meetings represented their senior colleagues responsible for deciding the content of proposals. Much information transmitted from LEA to school level was disseminated through documents like proposals for the area or a newsletter, written by LEA specialists. Everyone learned of the decisions taken on behalf of the Secretary of State, but very few people from other system levels had actually met the minister concerned. Much leadership activity had to be conducted through intermediaries, and considerable attention paid to facilitating interaction through means other than face-to-face encounters;
- since the initiative was prompted by central government, instigated at LEA level, and put into practice in schools, there were many *management tasks across system levels*, primarily where LEA officials were responsible for tasks requiring action in schools. Some conducted consultation meetings to gather responses from school staff and members of their

community, others undertook specialist tasks like organising movement of furniture and equipment from closing to surviving schools. Central government civil servants liaised with senior LEA officials to ensure that proposals lay within parameters set by central government. Leadership strategies needed to include encouraging change agents with cross-level management tasks to consider the context and perspective of people operating at other system levels.

Fifth, complex educational change does not take place in isolation. There is bound to be considerable *interaction with the multidimensional context* in which it is set:

- the *impact of an evolving profile of other planned and unplanned changes* on the LEA reorganisation initiative could be strong, as where attempts were made to co-opt the central government policy of promoting the GM schools sector to escape closure. All school staff had to implement education reforms alongside whatever reorganisation demanded, and were subject to the wider central government imperative of achieving greater efficiency in public sector expenditure. Leaders' concern was to plan the change with other known changes in mind, but also to monitor and be ready to adapt where other changes affected their efforts;
- the *impact of the accretion of past changes* on reorganisation was equally significant. Imperatives to downsize provision in both LEAs were a consequence of past expansion at a time of population growth. The surplus capacity created as the school age population dropped had contributed to the level of public expenditure that, in a harsher economic climate of increased global competition, had come to be deemed excessive. The legacy of past changes was a parameter for leadership, affecting possibilities for current change.

These characteristics of complexity exhibited by the LEA reorganisation initiatives point to the diversity encompassed by most components of the change; to intrinsic reciprocal links between this change and its context; to the limited control that leaders realistically have over the many people involved and affected; and so to the ways complexity of change affects leadership.

Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Prior to analysing how the change leadership strategies of LEA officials related to the complexity of reorganisation initiatives, it is necessary to identify the factors which distinguish leadership approaches. A simple definition of leadership is 'any attempt to influence the behaviour of another individual or group' (Hersey 1984). It implies that leadership involves a relationship between leaders and the followers whose behaviour they are attempting to affect. A number of factors have been identified which typify different forms of leader-follower relationship within various models of transformational leadership (Northcote 1997; Leithwood et al 1999). They build on the normative theory of Burns (1978) who distinguished 'transactional leadership' - where leaders exchange rewards valued by followers in return for their support in achieving leaders' goals, from 'transformational leadership' - where leaders attend to followers' needs and motivate them to transcend their immediate self interest to pursue a loftier goal. He regarded these two forms as alternatives, transformational leadership being more effective and morally uplifting for leaders and followers alike. It is notable that Burns viewed power to be expressed in transactional leadership alone, on the Weberian assumption that power is confined to 'getting people to do what they would not otherwise do'. According to the more inclusive definition of power adopted in the cultural and political perspective, however, it is equally expressed in transformational leadership through the

attempt to 'make things happen' by shaping followers' culture to dispose them favourably towards leaders.

A widely employed model was put forward by Bass (1985), claiming that these approaches were not alternatives but lay along a continuum from transformational, through transactional, to laissez-faire leadership. He identified seven factors associated with different forms of leadership along this continuum. At one end, *transformational leadership* helps followers to transcend their self interests for the sake of some wider group goal. It embodies:

- *idealised influence* - leaders are charismatic, acting as strong role models for followers who wish to emulate them, expressing high standards of ethical conduct which win followers' trust and respect and provide them with a sense of purpose;
- *inspirational motivation* - leaders communicate high expectations, engaging followers in developing and making a commitment to achieving a shared vision whose compass extends beyond their immediate concerns;
- *intellectual stimulation* - leaders encourage followers to be creative and innovative, to challenge their own and leaders' assumptions, and to engage in problem solving;
- *individualised consideration* - leaders create a supportive climate where they encourage followers to identify their diverse individual needs, support their efforts to meet these needs and so promote their development.

In the middle of the continuum, *transactional leadership* is less concerned with followers' needs, development or commitment to a group goal than with creating situations where it is in the self interest of followers to do what leaders wish. This form of leadership operates through:

- *contingent reward* - leaders give specified rewards in exchange for followers' efforts, negotiating agreement about what needs to be done and the payoff for doing so;
- *management by exception* - leaders offer corrective criticism, actively monitoring whether followers' actions comply with leaders' requirements, or more passively intervening only after problems have arisen.

At the other extreme is 'nonleadership', expressed through:

- *laissez-faire* - a hands off approach where leaders abdicate responsibility, avoid decisions, give followers no feedback and make no effort to meet followers' needs.

Bass viewed transformational and transactional factors as complementary requirements for leadership to be effective: transformational leadership generates the enhanced commitment to a group-wide interest and the consequent extra effort which are necessary to bring about change; transactional leadership fosters ongoing work by meeting followers' basic needs linked with their sectional self interests.

This conception of leadership usefully distinguishes between factors reflected in the change leadership efforts of LEA officials responsible for school reorganisation initiatives. A significant omission from the model, however, is the leadership situation or context, embodying things - not of leaders' choosing - that 'make leaders happen'. Just as politics is the 'art of the possible', change leadership is the art of identifying and doing what is possible within

limits imposed by the situation. Effectiveness of change leadership is therefore contingent: what works in one set of circumstances may not work in another. Characteristics of complex educational change are situational variables which may significantly affect the expression of leadership factors and their contribution to leadership success.

Making Restricted Transformational and Transactional Leadership Happen

Why then, from a cultural and political perspective, did characteristics of reorganisation as a complex educational change offer LEA officials little choice but to adopt the change leadership strategies they did? First, let us consider what LEA officials could not afford to choose. LEA reorganisation initiatives implicated actors at all levels of a ***multilevel education system*** where authority over diverse components of the change was unevenly distributed, such that LEA officials' responsibility for reorganisation far over-reached their authority. Even where LEA officials did have authority, they could be inhibited from making full use of it. The ***magnitude*** of the initiatives meant they were heavily dependent on other people whose expertise and cooperation were needed for implementation, yet who could potentially use influence to resist. LEA officials' dependence ran to aspects of reorganisation where they did not have authority. Here they were even more reliant on others' acquiescence or support.

One CEO noted that LEA authority existed, in principle, to publish proposals for the maximum number of school closures, to make all school staff in these schools redundant and to require them to apply for the smaller number of jobs available in the institutions surviving reorganisation. The probable consequence would have been to alienate all school staff and many parents who, together, had sufficient influence to undermine the initiative, whether through industrial action, lobbying local councillors who needed their votes, or seeking GM school status (which, if successful, would restrict gains to be made by reducing surplus places). Leadership strategies requiring use of authority which were bound to trigger strong resistance, let alone attempts to apply coercive sanctions to overcome it, were therefore out of the question.

Second, let us consider what LEA officials could not afford to ignore. The ***magnitude*** and ***differential impact*** of the initiatives meant that they affected a large number of people who would have varied awareness of the promotional interest behind reorganisation as a totality and partially incompatible sectional interests reflected in their beliefs and values concerning reorganisation. An alternative leadership strategy for lowering the potential for resistance was the opposite of coercive enforcement of authority: using both authority and influence to shape other stakeholders' beliefs and values so that their allegiance to incompatible sectional interests was tempered by acceptance of the wider promotional interest of LEA officials ('if you can't beat them, get them to join you!'). Culture building was therefore crucial if LEA officials were to be empowered by the other stakeholders on whom they depended. This is the essence of transformational leadership: ***idealised influence*** promotes belief in the credibility of leaders and so willingness to accept their use of authority and influence; ***inspirational motivation*** provides the source for a shared vision which broadens followers' horizons, promoting acceptance of leaders' promotional interest; ***intellectual stimulation*** invites followers' creative contribution to detailed planning and solving problems; and ***individualised consideration*** symbolises the genuineness of leaders' concern for the wellbeing and development of followers while their needs are actually moulded to conform with leaders' promotional interest.

Along with the *magnitude* and the *differential impact* of the initiatives, their *interrelated and differentiated parts* and the *multilevel system* in which they were embedded all contributed to the need for communication. The meaning of the change for different stakeholders was likely to differ because of the number affected and their diverse contexts. Since they they occupied varied 'lifeworlds' (Schutz 1972), not only was information required for creating and updating plans if the many people involved were to play their part at the right time but, more fundamentally, promulgation of altruistic values was necessary to promote the culture of acceptance disposing them to make the desired contribution. LEA officials had to establish and employ multiple channels of communication for dissemination and feedback, generating a sense being part of the same endeavour among people who may never meet face-to-face.

However, this is a restricted form of transformational leadership. LEA officials instigated reorganisation initiatives, but hardly under conditions of their own choosing. They were located in the middle of this *multilevel education system*, sandwiched between national government and schools. The *multidimensional context* which delimited LEA officials' room to manoeuvre included central government pressure to realise the promotional interest of reorganisation while offering the the GM escape route serving a sectional interest in preserving the status quo for particular schools. The need for LEA officials to express a vision, and the content of this vision of reorganisation as a road to higher quality of provision and ultimately school improvement, were thrust upon them by central government.

Third, a complementary strategy takes us into the realm of transactional leadership. LEA officials sought a confluence of interests where other stakeholders' sectional concerns could be made to coincide sufficiently with the LEA wide promotional interest ('if you can't beat them, meet them halfway'). Here LEA officials could employ their authority over distribution of resources which were valued by other stakeholders to align their respective interests. They negotiated mutually acceptable deals, the stuff of *contingent reward*, where these stakeholders could secure resources they wanted in return for compliance with LEA requests. We should note, in passing, that Bass's model of transformational leadership overplays the distinction between group goals (here the LEA wide promotional interest in reorganisation) and individual self interests (here sectional interests in getting what was perceived to be best for each individual, group or school). Many occasions were engineered to align self or sectional interests of stakeholders at school level with the group goal or promotional interest in reorganisation advanced by LEA officials.

Fourth, *management by exception*, the second transactional leadership factor, was also evident. Other stakeholders' contribution to the LEA vision, problem solving, consideration of their diverse sectional interests, or negotiated deals were allowable only within parameters that safeguarded the reorganisation initiatives as a whole. LEA officials monitored the perceptions and activities of other stakeholders through the many channels of communication, and took pre-emptive or corrective action where the latter were interpreted as approaching the boundaries of these parameters or to have stepped outside them. The cultural thrust of LEA officials' change leadership strategies minimised the likelihood of such transgression, but they were ready to use their authority and influence to bring other stakeholders back into line. While Bass implies that transactional leadership operates to maintain the status quo, it was demonstrably integral to LEA officials' change leadership strategies as a complement to restricted transformational leadership. Conspicuous by its absence was a laissez-faire strategy. Even when reorganisation was officially over, LEA officials continued to track progress with institutionalisation of reorganisation in schools and were ready to intervene.

The balance of strategies expressing restricted transformational and transactional leadership varied with the stage of reorganisation as officials' priorities shifted (see Table 2). Specific activities often related to more than one leadership factor and *vice versa* but, for the sake of clarity, they have been listed according to the most salient factor related to any activity. Since similar change leadership strategies were adopted in both LEAs, with differences appearing only at the level of detail, a combined summary is given here. Each leadership factor will be considered in turn.

Table 2: Change leadership expressed by LEA officials in managing reorganisation

Stage of change	*Restricted transformational leadership*				*Transactional leadership*	
	Idealised Influence	*Inspirational motivation*	*Intellectual stimulation*	*Individualised consideration*	*Contingent reward*	*Management by exception*
***Initiation:* consultative proposals, consulting at school level, submitting firm proposals**	adopting professional approach, capitalising on legacy of past authority, establishing code of practice	stating LEA wide vision of reorganisation for improving provision, sharing vision	incremental planning, inviting response to proposals, preparing to implement proposals	calculating needs for provision, consulting and responding to individuals and groups	negotiating alternative proposals, negotiating expenditure on building and refurbishment, offering transition money	monitoring consultation, ensuring compliance with the law, resisting GM initiatives
	Date of decisions on LEA firm proposals and applications from schools for GM status					
***Implementation in schools:* staffing, building, equipping, preparing to develop schools**	adopting professional approach, capitalising on legacy of past authority, operating code of practice	referring to vision, focus of preparatory staff and governor development support	making reorganisation arrangements, preparing for new start in schools	consulting and responding to expressed individual or group needs	negotiating over staffing, building and refurbishment, furniture and equipment	monitoring progress with preparation, supporting or corrective action where problems identified
	Date set for formal enactment of reorganisation (school closures, mergers etc)					
***Institutionalisation in schools:* establishing procedures and curriculum, developing staff**	ongoing professional approach	stating LEA wide vision for continuous school improvement, focus of staff development support	supporting new start in schools	responding to expressed individual or group needs	negotiating over resources in response to expressed individual or group needs	ongoing monitoring, supporting or corrective action where problems identified

Culture building featured heavily throughout initiation. It was essential for LEA officials to gain the acquiescence and support of stakeholders whose resistance could halt the initiatives. During the implementation stage this culture had to be consolidated while enacting decisions to reorganise schools through the efforts of others, including those who had resisted the LEA proposals. Transactions and monitoring featured throughout both stages as LEA officials

sought to meet other stakeholders' sectional interests, both to win their cooperation and to counter the efforts of any who might attempt to undermine reorganisation of particular schools or to destroy the entire initiative. The institutionalisation stage was marked by more diffuse leadership activity. Where reorganisation was over, school improvement became the major emphasis of culture building and transactions connected with resources, backed by ongoing monitoring.

Restricted Transformational Leadership

Forging a culture of acceptance of reorganisation through what LEA officials called a 'climate for change' was an especially high priority during the initiation stage. *Idealised influence* was expressed, first, through the normal approach to interaction on all LEA matters led by the exemplary behaviour of the CEOs or other senior colleagues, summed up by one official as their 'professional approach'. A major test of this approach was their performance at the sometimes stormy public consultation meetings on proposals for particular schools. Most other stakeholders generally held officials in high regard, perceiving them to act with integrity and fairness in the best interest of the LEA as a whole. Second, many school staff and governors retained, subliminally, an outmoded belief in LEA authority, although they were conscious that central government reforms had placed much of it in their hands. Continuing habitual deference to the LEA resulted in many governors and headteachers being ready to accept LEA proposals except where they profoundly undermined their sectional interest. At a more conscious level, the large majority of other stakeholders respected and trusted LEA officials as a result of working with them hitherto. Third, symbolic of LEA officials' concern for school staff whose jobs were threatened by their proposals was the instigation of an LEA policy of avoiding compulsory redundancy wherever possible and negotiation of a voluntary code of practice with governors and headteachers in schools throughout the LEAs. Where vacancies arose, they agreed to give priority to appointing displaced staff from closing or merging schools who would otherwise face being made redundant. This code was well received by school staff unions and widely interpreted as indicative of LEA officials' genuine concern for their members, helping to convince them that the reorganisation initiatives should be supported.

Idealised influence continued to play its part during implementation, where officials were continually scrutinised as they engaged in tricky negotiations with school staff and governors over staffing and other issues in the run-up to the reorganisation date. As occasion required, they would appeal to altruism by referring to the principle of fairness to all affected by reorganisation, especially where other stakeholders' pursuit of their sectional interest was out of line with the promotional interest in reorganisation overall. Frequent reference to the code of practice was instrumental in persuading governors and headteachers in expanding schools to accept displaced staff with a local reputation of marginal competence. Once reorganisation was over, officials' played a less proactive part with other stakeholders in reorganised schools, settling back to their routine role which was still marked by the same professional approach.

Inspirational motivation was also highly significant during the initiation stage, particularly so for the initial phase when other stakeholders first learned about the initiatives and considered potential implications for their sectional interests. At the outset CEOs and their senior colleagues, in consultation with local councillors, articulated a vision for LEA wide reorganisation which made the most of the necessity of responding to central government pressure to reorganise. Emphasis was placed on the rare opportunity to enhance education in

the locality. The vision centred on gaining better value for money by removing surplus places; investing capital in school buildings and refurbishment which would not otherwise be released by central government; using revenue no longer needed for maintaining underused buildings to improve provision by enhancing the budget for each surviving school; and changing the age of student transfer between schools where necessary to align with the key stages of the national curriculum. This view of reorganisation was disseminated to every school through consultation documents, other stakeholders were invited to endorse the vision, and it was reiterated consistently in public consultation meetings, newsletters and statements in the local media. Overall, these measures were designed to improve conditions surrounding teaching and learning, indirectly to enhance student learning outcomes (Wallace and Pocklington 1998).

Once central government approval of firm proposals was received the vision was enacted throughout the implementation stage, whether through building work in preparation for reorganisation or through LEA provision of in-service training to support school staff and governors affected. Officials made frequent reference to it in negotiating the reallocation of displaced staff. During this stage of later phases of reorganisation, staff who had been through reorganisation in an early phase were sometimes invited to act as ambassadors for officials, advising others on management issues and confirming the benefits accruing to their schools. By the institutionalisation stage, concern with promoting continual school improvement in line with emerging central government policy had replaced the reorganisation focus.

There was no evidence that LEA officials' change leadership strategies included deliberately generating opportunities for *intellectual stimulation*. The multiplicity of interrelated and differentiated parts that reorganisation embodied, coupled with the uncertainty generated by the potential to generate unsurmountable resistance, nevertheless gave rise to myriad problems to be solved. The initiation stage offered great scope for creative thinking within the LEA, including drafting and revising proposals which took many demographic and financial factors and feedback from local communities into account; organising hundreds of consultation meetings at schools; and preparing for implementation on the assumption that most firm proposals would be approved. At school level, problem solving concentrated on responding to draft proposals through representations at consultation meetings or written feedback to maximise the chance of achieving their sectional interests within the parameters of legislation.

Approved proposals were almost universally accepted. Problem solving at school level now no longer challenged LEA officials' assumptions but concentrated on working out how proposals were to be implemented. LEA officials and headteachers and governors, through whose efforts reorganisation arrangements were to be enacted, were faced at this stage with many complex management tasks. Those in schools affected by the more radical proposals were most sorely exercised. Reallocating staff and ensuring that any building work was completed on time were major joint tasks led by officials; school staff led preparations for ordering or transfer of furniture and for preparatory staff development activities. They were solely responsible for planning the new start for the institutionalisation stage in their post-reorganisation school as staff, often from different institutions, learned to work together in the new regime.

Without strong expression of *individualised consideration* it is unlikely that the initiatives would have survived the initiation stage because sectional interests were so diverse and the potential to resist proposals so great. Officials arranged for themselves or a spokesperson to be accessible at all times to respond to individuals or to receive deputations. Careful attention was paid when drafting proposals to take into account local circumstances. Measures included

using relevant statistical and financial information such as projections of student numbers or costs of different options. The promise was made that proposals would be modified in the light of consultation where a compelling case was made. It was delivered for a sizeable minority of schools and well publicised, demonstrating that consultation was genuine and helping to sustain officials' credibility with other stakeholders.

Subsequently, LEA officials liaised closely over implementation tasks with headteachers and governors and, where appropriate, individual teachers and support staff. The details of implementation differed for every school, and within set parameters officials sought to respond to the expression of individual or group needs. They included consulting staff concerned with refurbishment of specialist facilities, responding to special requests for furniture or equipment, and arranging for displaced staff to visit schools when considering a change of career path. Once institutionalisation began, officials worked in the normal way, willing to respond where possible to individual requests.

Transactional Leadership

Contingent reward was featured strongly throughout reorganisation. During the initiation stage, LEA officials engaged in extensive negotiation about the details of proposals. Their search for a confluence of interests led them occasionally to strike agreements with other stakeholders over the fate of particular schools. In one instance the preferred option of a local councillor was accepted as an alternative to the LEA proposal for a particular school. This person was in a pivotal position within local government to promote colleague councillors' endorsement of the full package of proposals. Acceding to the councillor's sectional interest guaranteed support for officials' promotional interest in LEA wide reorganisation. A feature of many proposals which acted as an incentive for other stakeholders was the promise of capital expenditure on new building and refurbishment, and the allocation of 'transition money' to ease the process of implementation.

Once implementation was inevitable, extensive negotiations over staffing, building and equipment continued between LEA officials, headteachers and governors while preparing for reorganisation. Most notable was LEA officials' authority over a voluntary premature retirement (VPR) package. One official depicted it as 'the oil in the gearbox' because VPR could act as a strong incentive, not only to staff who were eligible, but also to governors whose sectional interest could be served through the opportunity VPR might offer to appoint 'new blood' or to offload a marginally competent teacher. Officials' actions rested on parameters for the scheme whereby eligibility was limited to staff aged 50 or over on permanent contracts with at least two years' service in the LEA, and any arrangement must normally enable a redundancy to be avoided. Applications were invited from all those eligible in closing schools, empowering officials substantially to reduce the number of staff whose redeployment they must secure. The VPR rules allowed officials to employ negotiating tactics designed to raise governors' awareness of possibilities, reflecting a confluence between LEA and school interests of which governors would otherwise not have been aware. Officials frequently suggested to governors that a VPR arrangement in one school could be linked with avoiding redundancy in another. Confluence of interests extended to individual staff wishing to take VPR. Union representatives supported the LEA's VPR arrangements because they met members' sectional interest in maximising their financial compensation. Eligibility for the VPR package and other incentives connected with reorganisation ceased at the point of

reorganisation, and incentives available to officials were dramatically reduced to a small measure of support for individual needs arisng during institutionalisation.

Management by exception surfaced most noticeably when officials' promotional interest was placed in jeopardy, yet officials continually monitored the actions of other stakeholders and invited feedback. One central concern for officials at the initiation stage was to ensure they complied with all requirements of relevant legislation . It was vital to avoid creating a loophole which those who wished to resist their proposals might exploit. Another was to counter any attempt by governors and local communities to opt out of LEA control. Where school communities embarked on the procedure for applying to central government for GM status, officials used influence where possible to persuade them to desist. Officials and local councillors would attend the GM consultation meetings and present their case for the LEA proposal affecting the school concerned (usually recommending closure) and neighbouring institutions to which parents' children would go. In the event applications for GM status were made in twelve out of 352 schools affected by reorganisation in the two LEAs, and of these only five (all in one LEA) were approved.

Monitoring continued during the implementation stage, focusing on progress with preparation for reorganisation. Corrective action was rare, since most involved operated within legitimate parameters. Rarely, pre-emptive action might be taken, as where officials who had brokered a VPR deal reminded governors that they must appoint a replacement teacher who was facing redundancy, and that otherwise they would incur the sanction of paying out of the school budget for enhancement of the pension for the teacher taking VPR. At the institutionalisation stage LEA officials' activity was reduced to 'light touch' monitoring and responsive support in the minority of instances where school staff experienced difficulty with developing a new corporate culture in merged institutions.

Mission Accomplished

The success of this combination of LEA officials' restricted transformational and transactional strategies is indicated by the outcomes of both reorganisation initiatives. The initiation stage was completed for each phase; strong pressure group resistance was limited to one area where middle class parents organised themselves to protect a few village schools (they succeeded but made little impact beyond these schools); there was no or only very small loss of schools to the GM sector; all other proposals eventually received central government approval; they were implemented without incurring significant union resistance or staff redundancies; and institutionalisation was reasonably unproblematic in most institutions. The quality of educational provision was improved for many schools in terms of their buildings, facilities and equipment, though any impact on students' learning can have been only indirect.

To sum up: characteristics of reorganisation as a complex educational change created a contingent context for change leadership where leaders had to minimise the risk of stimulating resistance. Instead they focused on cultural transformation, promoting a vision driven by central government. They used their authority over valued resources as an incentive for a multiplicity of transactions with other stakeholders, and were ready to take corrective action where possible to keep reorganisation on track. These strategies enabled LEA officials to achieve their goal despite unfavourable conditions set by central government, holding them responsible for reorganisation initiatives while both depriving them of authority and pursuing the contradictory policy of promoting the GM schools sector.

Further research is needed to determine the extent to which characteristics contributing to the complexity of reorganisation obtain for major changes in education and other sectors in the UK and elsewhere. If so, investigation may valuably focus on how these characteristics 'make leaders happen' by pushing with those with change leadership responsibility but with limited authority towards restricted transformational and transactional leadership strategies. It seems probable that broadly similar contextual conditions will obtain within education and other parts of the public sector in large western countries featuring multilevel, relatively decentralised systems where authority is widely distributed and major changes require coordinated cross-level activity to implement them. The sheer number of people involved suggests that leaders are bound to be heavily dependent on followers - whose potential to resist cannot reliably be controlled through coercive sanctions and whose support must therefore be won. A new rule for change leadership may turn out to be: 'as the complexity of change and leaders' dependence on followers increase, the importance of promoting a culture of acceptance and using valued resources as a negotiating platform increase.

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